

Edward; The Vampire Scientist

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Edward; The Vampire Scientist

Edward, the Vampire Scientist. by Adrian Tullberg  
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My name is Edward DeVieres. I'm a 127-year old vampire.

I was born in 1872, in London, during the Victorian era. My father was well connected within the social set, old money behind him and a lot of new money coming through tenancies in Ireland, mines in Africa and a great deal of real estate held in which is now known as inner London today. My mother was a French citizen who was born in Australia, meeting my father in Eton.

I was educated mostly in business practices, but found a great deal of satisfaction in the sciences, preferably that of medicine and engineering. My family approved of this, a man who knew his business could rule it with an unshakeable grip.

There was something else - my father was part of an esoteric group of scholars calling themselves the Watchers. Self-proclaimed guardians against matters supernatural. He claimed that I could be called up to swell their ranks too.

Apparently even valiant scholars and their 'destined' female warriors need ready sources of funds, and management of their revenue. Of course, after a few short meetings with some of these 'Watchers' and their 'Slayer', I had generated my own ideas of how these waifs, usually dredged from society's barrel, or exotic beauties from the colonies, fulfilled their destinies, and it wasn't an attractive mental vision. When they were invariably - and distressingly rapidly - replaced, I thought they were simply packed off to whatever backwater they came from when these ancient men tired of their charms.

I barely believed it of course - this was a rational age, when science was foremost and superstition was the bygone practice of a time gone by. Still - let my father be treasurer of a club of secretive scholars. It was less embarrassing than the initiation rituals of the Freemasons.

I was twenty-seven when I met the woman, in a dark alleyway. Semi-paralytic due to cheap ale and gin which was used to clean floors in a previous life, I heard screams of pain and ran - well, staggered really - into the alleyway, and pulled the woman away from the struggling couple. When I turned to examine the woman, her distorted visage and gore-dripping mouth made me realise I had made a catastrophic error of judgement.

I turned to run - and hit a brick wall headfirst. Everything else was a mass of half-remembered sensations.

When I came to, I was lying in a bier in what I recognised to be my home's cellar. I now remember the pentagram and various instruments used in occult rituals scattered around where I lay - but I barely noticed. I saw my father, face stony, looking at me with an expression of rage that I never saw before, and my mother, looking at me in the background with a fearful gaze.

The next thing I experienced was a thirst. A burning, throat-tightening, gut-wrenching eye-tightening desire for liquid of the like I never experienced before.

I moved forward to my father on shaking legs - and he produced a wooden cross, the one which hung in the kitchens. I was about to ask what it was for when the very shape of it, the very concept itself within my brain was as bright and painful as staring into the brightest light you could ever imagine.

My hands came up reflexively, a hiss drawn from my throat. I stood like that until I regained my control, and drew my hands down to my sides, staring at that piece of wood, and my father's gaze, with all the strength in my body.

My father stated that I had been taken by a vampire - and turned. The bitch apparently found the thought of a watcher's son being undead very amusing. I swore to share a joke with the woman as soon as possible.

I still didn't believe it, until my father slid a shard of a mirror to my feet, not coming near me for an instant. When I looked - I couldn't see anything, no matter how many times I turned the mirror, how many other objects I reflected.

Something else was slid to my feet - a few thousand pounds in notes, gold coins, some of my mother's favourite jewels. In short, my father was throwing me out.

I grabbed the bag and left without a word.

I think that the humiliation of having his son turned was the worst pain for him. Not the sense of his son transformed into a blood-lusting demon, the death of his only child, but how his standing of his fellows would suffer was the worst blow of all.

The first night was the worst. Sensations of cold, heat and pain were dulled, but replaced by this craving - for what I knew now was blood. My head swam, my stomach churned, nausea - I understood in that instant what fellow undead suffered every moment of their existence, and sympathised.

Any self-pity evaporated when I glanced at my watch. Nearly midnight, but a summer night. A scant six hours to operate outside. I would need shelter, and someplace to - to feed. A moment of revulsion crossed my mind at this realisation, but I told myself it was simply a matter of survival.

I had a series of advantages compared to the average newborn vampire - I knew every strength and weakness inherent to my species down to the minute details. I knew the patrol routines that the Watchers kept to. I also knew how bodies attacked by vampires were detected, and could disguise my tracks accordingly. Most importantly, I knew my father's pride, and that he would keep my change of state a secret as long as possible - meaning that the Watchers would not deviate from the norm.

I headed down to the West End with all speed. Five minutes from my usual haunts near Pall Mall was a den of inequity and vice - the perfect place to hide, organise - and feed.

It took me minutes to find a room to rent, my landlady being a long-standing daughter of the game - a prostitute for you modern readers. I boarded up the window with a borrowed hammer and five stout planks of wood, with a threat of death by torture should they be removed. Next, I headed for the docks in a stolen overcoat which could be thrown over my flesh should I be caught in the sun. I also carried a large hessian sack filled with dirt.

My first victim was a large sailor, nearly a foot taller than I, most of his bulk comprising of muscle and bone, nearly three feet wide across the shoulders. He didn't stand a chance against my thirst. I waited until he was barely ten feet away from the waterfront, then dragged him to the shadows. The initial shock of the new blood hitting my throat was ecstasy, heaven and hell combined. He struggled wildly which only made his blood flow faster into my parched throat.

When he finally died, I broke his neck, knowing that the possibility of him turning was low but not wanting to take any chances. I weighted him down with the sack full of dirt, then threw the corpse into the firth. I hurried back to my room, covering my blood-stained outfit with the overcoat.

I spent six months in the West End. I learned how to prey, learning which ships came in, the nationalities of the various sailors, and most importantly, who would not be missed.

I left when I saw a well-dressed young lady walking alone in one of the pubs where I searched for the dull, drunk and well-fed that compromised my diet. Her lithe nature, her confidence that a lady of her station should not have in this area, her dance-like steps indicating a well-trained athlete.

Obviously a Slayer. I booked passage on a ship heading for the colonies in China that very night, and spent the remaining days in my

room with a large supply of caged rats.

Remarkably, my money supply wasn't as low as I thought. Robbing my victims helped in that regard, as well as sleeping most of the day.

In China, I was able to rent a private residence near the British Consulate, passing myself off as a wandering scholar under a grant from the British Sporting Association attempting to categorise the different fighting styles under the generic term of 'Kung-Fu'. The Watchers already had extensive notes on the various styles, thus I knew enough of the local experts to create a public facade of my 'cover'. I learned a smattering of Mandarin but hired a translator anyway. My days were spent in my light-proof house writing up the various notes, admitting several experts of various arts inside, demonstrating Quan-Fa, Taiji Quan, Shaolin-si, and Shang/Nan Quan to name a few. I actually wrote a very good paper on the subject. I still own the document, a yellowing testament to another age.

I still preyed. Local bandits and pirates were plentiful in the region. Remarkably habitual in nature, they congregated in the same areas, in the same taverns, the same waters. It was expedient to row out to a pirate ship, swim underwater for half a mile - easy when you have no real need to breathe - and creep on board and slaughter every body on board. I did this three times until they caught on and moored an extra mile offshore.

One of these ships were loaded with several artworks - I spent the rest of the night carting these back to my house, and several more days were spent sending these to a warehouse back in England.

I spent five years there, feeding off and robbing the thieves. I could speak Chinese in various dialects exceptionally well. Some more art was packed off to England. The marketplaces were thriving and not a single Christian symbol in sight.

I never preyed on an 'innocent', and still haven't. Don't preconceive this as any act of mercy or conscience on my part - it is the simple fact that the disappearance of the innocent is guaranteed to raise hell more than any other act on this planet. Consider the headlines whenever a child is kidnapped as a prime example. My survival depends on secrecy, and killing those who will either not be missed, or those who are openly reviled, is a way to guarantee my continued existence. Nothing more, nothing less. Other undead, who enjoy the hunt, the vicious preying and slaughter - like the infamous Angelus, to raise an extreme example - are harbouring a subconscious death-wish. I want nothing more than survival - and to live in the greatest possible luxury.

I left a few months before the Boxer Rebellion. I knew that somebody would notice the rising deaths in the region, although I was as careful as ever, and the ever-rising hatred of foreigners, specifically the British, would make me the prime suspect should anybody want to mount a serious investigation. I've always found that a good cure for cockiness was to place my hand in a sunbeam, which quickly impressed me of how fragile I was in this world.

Russia was a utopia - temperatures which only the undead could survive, yet a cultural mentality for festivities, to 'party on' which ensured that many would still congregate in public buildings.

The bandits were plentiful, and the populace poor enough to make my funds stretch a very long way. I ended up buying large tracts of land in Siberia in order to guarantee the security of local officials.

In between preying and avoiding the sun, I began to undertake a detailed scientific study of the vampiric condition. I was my own guinea pig, determining my own physical limits, noting the time taken to heal certain degrees of wounds, how long I could withstand the ever-present thirst, how much animal blood I could consume without ill effect.

I spent a year experimenting on my biology before I gave up and started experimenting on others - capturing those who would least be missed among my victims and turning them, then working on my theories at my leisure. I discovered that wounds could regenerate at quadruple the normal speed, at least, if the wound was treated with blood.

Many decades later, when hypodermics were more easily accessible, I discovered that injecting the muscle or muscle group nearest the wound would prompt a maximum of seventeen times faster than normal vampire regeneration. Oddly enough, when I tried to ingest blood via injection, hoping to reduce the minimum blood amount needed for my survival, my thirst only intensified, until I glutted myself. My current theory is that it is an evolutionary reflex, and that judicious bypassing of the gastronomic system only aggravates this hunger.

I spent over a decade in Russia, noting with a passing interest the affairs of Europe and the growth of the two vast super-bloc armies that led to World War One. I was too far away for the events to affect me, one of the advantages of living where I was. My greatest concern was when England joined the fight, that my collection of Oriental artwork could be damaged.

I left in 1916, when my network of paid informants warned me of the Communist rumblings under the Marxist banner.

For the first time, I entered America, using the first of many forged birth certificates as a much younger man - by this point in time I was 44 years old. Fortunately, I was wealthy enough for the then immigration officials to visit me in a considerably upper-class hotel during the night, claiming a hangover from the previous night's festivities. The phrase 'if they're rich, it's eccentric behaviour' has saved me throughout my entire undead existence, so my capitalist nature is not entirely greed-motivated - although it is a powerful influence in my behaviour, I'm the first to admit.

I noted the machinations of the Anti-Saloon League with interest - even now, America still hasn't entirely shaken off the Puritan mentality of it's founders. I made some guesses on human nature, and used the telegram service to stockpile a large supply of quality alcohol - wines, brandies, spirits and the like, the high-alcohol low-storage-space time-improving variety - in Canada. I also made the first of several payments to certain individuals in Washington - Congressmen, Senators, and entrenched career bureaucrats. Specifically those officials who watched the borders.

In 1920, when the alcohol-prohibiting Eighteenth Amendment was

passed, I had enough Customs officials in my pocket to transport and sell literally tons of top-quality alcohol throughout the suddenly thirsty land at vastly inflated prices. I became the one of the first bootleggers.

A large proportion of the resulting cash flow went into buying real estate throughout the country, particularly properties in high-rent areas. I was thinking of long-term investment, literally hundreds of years ahead. The other places were anonymous houses scattered throughout America, which became my personal bolt-holes, refuges filled with money, food, resources should the worst happen. Also overseas properties were bought, in England, Europe. My aim was to have something placed aside so that personal bankruptcy would be a personal impossibility.

So when the 1929 crash occurred, my personal losses were minimal. I remember walking through a city street suddenly filled with the destitute, when a proud looking woman, blonde, walked straight up to me and announced that I could do anything I wanted with her if I had the money.

I looked at her, noting that she was an upper-class woman obviously at her last rope. I took her to my apartment, showed by Game Face, and stated I would pay her one hundred dollars every two weeks if I could feed off her.

She succumbed. Our arrangement was far better for her than for me - comparatively safer, and the generous cash sum would provide for her family.

I still don't know why I did it - I could have torn her throat out, or simply had a conventional prostitute-client relationship, and paid the money anyway with the same end result. But I bled her for nearly five years, risking my entire existence. Perhaps I felt the need to share my secret, at least for a little while, with someone - anyone. Then one day she never turned up for our regular appointment. I shrugged and continued on.

Previous investments in munitions factories and the like boomed during World War Two. After that, the Cold War and pre-glasnost tensions with the USSR continued to fill my coffers, particularly with investments in the aerospace and armament industries.

Another discovery was made and utilised in World War 2 - blood transfusion via transported plasma. Every vampire salivated at the fact of what is seen today as 'undead take-out'. I, however, made enough contributions to hospitals around the country to have access to various blood-banks. Anxious to tap into this new discovery, I diversified into medicine and the pharmaceutical industry - making a hefty profit as well as avoiding the messy nature of killing my victims and escaping witnesses.

Nowadays, I own various buses and medically trained personnel who drive around the country, parking at various low-income areas, and offering \$25 for each pint of blood donated. Their collection finds it's way to me. People are paid, I get fed, and I haven't had to kill anyone for food in decades.

Every major industry was a pie in which I took a slice. Since I was relatively financially secure, I decided to retake a long-lost

passion of mine; scientific research. I had enough Government officials in my pocket to demand anything now, and a few telephone calls later gave me medical permits and up to top secret classification on my activities.

With US Government endorsement, I sent vampire blood samples to the best biochemists around the world, taking a leaf from intelligence agencies and only telling the researchers what they needed to know. The resulting data was quite enlightening.

Vampire tissue is remarkably similar to viral organisms, and the manner in which humans are turned is directly related to deliberate infection. That is the reason for the contradictory reports of vampire strengths and weaknesses; there are radically different vampire strains out there. Some don't need invitation into homes. Some resist sunlight but have no magical potential. Some are immune to the cross but have a finite lifespan of less than a thousand years. A sub-species in Russia can laugh off a stake to the heart, requiring the wooden weapon shoved up behind the chin into the brain to terminate their existence. Also, personality traits can be passed on from sire to victim, a clear demonstration of RNA patterns at work. The strain *homines nocturna*, for instance, possess a marvellous organisational structure, using treaties with governments and similar organisations to guarantee their survival. Curiously enough, each vampire strain tends to congregate close to where they were turned, some deep-seated herd instinct, the source of the 'must sleep on their home soil' fallacy.

My end goal is to find a way to eliminate all vampiric weaknesses from my own biology. My first goal was to find a cure for solar sensitivity, either via medicine or surgery. A lot of my personal research went into that area, with little effect.

You are wondering why was I concentrating on the scientific area of things when I, a supernatural creature, was ignoring matters magical? Firstly, I have no aptitude in magic, or trust in the arts - it is simply too random, too unpredictable for my scholastic, scientific heart.. Second, I was sure that some other vampire had tried before, with far greater experience than I had, yet I had heard nothing about any success. If something like that happened, the Watchers, paranoid as they are about these things, would have heard about it. I still keep tabs on them, men recruited from Oxbridge and Eton have no idea about operational security, thankfully.

I studied on other matters - medicine, scientific breakthroughs. I spent several nights in E.R's as the 'visiting guest' of a grateful hospital administrator, learning the practical side of medicine. I could have become a doctor if I could explain away the obvious night-class factor. I briefly toyed with the idea of having a teacher come to me when Howard Hughes became prominent, but discounted the idea as being too public.

Decades passed. I could now rent private jets and travel anywhere in the world. Europe, Russia, Africa, Australia. I kept my holdings diverse and my operational staff low - the less people I had regular contact with, the better.

It was only recently that I made two important scientific discoveries.

Firstly, I discovered the method in which sunlight kills vampires. UV rays create a chemical reaction with the dermis, creating a toxin, similar to the way plants produce glucose in photosynthetic reactions. It is the vampire's own regenerative nature which carries the toxin so quickly throughout the body, destroying vampire cells in a rapid conflagration - ironically, if vampires healed at the same rate as a human, we might survive for at least half an hour under the sun.

Secondly, I isolated the toxin and the method it was created. I discovered that a chemical introduced into the vampire's system would bond with certain glands in the skin, blocking the receptors of UV rays and inhibiting the chemical process.

It took me five years and a fortune to create a chemical which would do the job. The dose would have to exceed over 500cc's, and injected directly into the heart in order to penetrate the vampiric system, and last long enough to last any period of time. A silicate sunscreen would also have to cover the skin - although inhibited, the skin would still be horribly vulnerable to sunlight.

That first day, when I staggered into the sunlight, looking around in amazement, skin shining due to the sunblock, eyes squinting, my body uncomfortably hot under a Armani suit - it was a release from a hundred year jail term.

For the first time in over a century I felt freedom.

I've refined the process now - each 100cc dose lasts me four hours, and I can boost the dose so that I can spend more time in the light. I can't continuously remain in the daytime, I can spend three or more 12-hour days using the Solar Blocker until my system is overwhelmed and I need to recover from the shaking tremors - I once spent a week shivering uncontrollably on my bed after I spent five days discovering the joy of hustling on the basketball courts.

Still, it's a tremendous sense of liberation. I have to keep it secret from the other vampires though, otherwise they'll tear me apart to get it. And if the Watchers ever found out, they would move heaven and earth to exterminate me and every proof of my existence. As long as nobody knows of my daylight freedom, I have an incalculable advantage.

Recently, my government contacts have told me of something happening in Sunnydale - a place where scores of vampires congregate due to the siren call of the Hellmouth, therefore a place I've made a point of avoiding, in person and in business.

It appears my researches have somehow attracted certain government agencies, particularly the ones dedicated to military research. My own fault.

There are plans to either eliminate the supernatural forces congregated there - or harness them. With the sheer tonnage of money thrown on military resources in this country, positive proof of vampires would send any dedicated team hustling to the ends of the Earth.

What rumours I've picked up involve a severe threat to the status quo between vampires and humans. That status quo keeps me very much alive



- and I have to preserve it at all costs.

A Slayer is permanently stationed on the Hellmouth, along with a renegade Watcher. I researched her, and her family background - and nearly collapsed in shock. It appears her great-grandmother on her mother's side was the woman I bled for money during the depression.

What - you don't realise the significance?

You honestly don't know how the Watchers can identify, track, and isolate anonymous Slayer Candidates from millions of females throughout the globe?

Basically, the process is a simple means of historical research, documentation and careful monitoring - a process the Watchers are vastly experienced at.

If a female is bitten, bled, left unturned and survives a vampire attack, any female descendants two or three generations down the line become Slayer Candidates. The eldest child - even by a second - becomes the Slayer. The rest remain unknowing Candidates, remaining that way until they reach adulthood, by then their biological advantage will disappear if inactivated - lucky them. The Watchers track down the whereabouts of every child from every female vampire victim that remained alive and human, and the precise moment of birth. If one Slayer dies, they simply book a flight to the next candidate's current residential address.

The vampire bite is infectious, as I stated before. No 'bite' can ever be totally sterile or clean. Therefore, vampire biological matter - usually saliva - remains within the victim's system, and is passed on in vitro to the child. It must be female-to-female contact, because the vampire matter is too complex to be passed on via the - brief contribution - made by the male.

The vampire matter is encountered by the child's immune system, and a resistance is created - a process similar to immunities created by vaccines. This resistance does not comprise of antibodies, but instead a gradual 'tweaking' of the child's genetic structure, modelled on the vampire's own physical robustness. This is a very exact process, and takes place over two or three generations, usually among first-line of the female descendants.

These changes lay somewhere in the introns - genetic 'filler' on the human genome - and remain dormant until Activation.

I have no theory as to why these changes take place, or why the changes remain dormant until one girl dies half-way across the globe. One theory shared by other researchers - I'm not the only scientist, although to the best of my knowledge, I am the only one with fangs - is that the Slayers are proof of the Gaia theory in action, Mother Earth throwing up antibodies to combat the vampiric infection.

This Slayer has part of me in her. This makes this situation all the more intriguing.

What should I do? Inform her anonymously of the threat?

Perhaps I should go there - I haven't been to California in decades.

Approach her. Offer an alliance.

There's no reason I shouldn't be accepted. I'm known by the Watchers to have a strictly non-violent lifestyle. I have millions in liquid resources, medical training, contacts where her and all her allies have none.

Can't tell her of the threat at first. It could compromise my own sources. Feed her a few clues, let her discover it by herself. Use the interim to gauge whether or not she'll go where she's pointed. If not - well, there's others who can do the job. A transformed witch, an uncertain boy who picked up military training via magic - and nobody ever found the renegade Slayer, did they?

It's time to step out of the shadows.

I'm Edward DeVieres, Vampire Scientist and Daywalker.

I'm going to Sunnydale.

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Feedback is appreciated.

End  
file.